

November 2009

## New chancellor & commissioner share goals with superintendents

Educational leaders in NYS can expect a new era of openness, partnership, and collaboration from the Regents and SED, according to new Chancellor of the NYS Board of Regents Merryl Tisch. She also promised a shift at the SED from being a regulatory authority to becoming a repository of resources and guidance regarding best practices, as well as an audit of all SED mandates to determine their effectiveness.

New State Education Commissioner Dr. David Steiner reinforced these promises, stating his commitment to listen and to seek collaboration to solve the problems facing public education in our state.

Both leaders spoke during the fall convention of The Council (NYS Council of School Superintendents) held at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center in early October.

Chancellor Tisch outlined areas providing opportunities to attract federal funding: aligning standards and assessments with federal models, improvement of teacher quality through better teacher preparation programs and professional development, and developing a comprehensive data system for all students preK through age 20.

Commissioner Steiner noted several challenges facing all education leaders: persistent performance gaps, lack of overall achievement, school violence, difficulties with the English language for immigrant children, special education costs, and the state's bleak financial position. He also identified SED priorities as being teacher quality (including teacher preparation issues), leadership, assessments more in line with national standards, equity issues in assessment, and curriculum improvements.



ABOVE: Dr. Thomas Rogers, Executive Director of The Council; Merryl Tisch, Chancellor of the NYS Board of Regents; and L. Oliver Robinson, Incoming President of The Council and Superintendent of the Shenandehowa CSD, after the Chancellor spoke to superintendents on October 4.



LEFT: Board of Regents Chancellor Merryl Tisch and NYS Education Commissioner Dr. David Steiner speaking to superintendents during the NYSCOSS fall conference which was held here in Rochester in early October.

The conference was attended by about 760 superintendents, senior district administrators, other educational leaders, and strategic partners.

Those attending the convention heard from internationally known educational leaders and participated in programs and discussion groups about several issues of importance to school district leaders.

To learn more, go to page 4.

# NEWS SCOPE



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## UPCOMING -

Saturday, November 7, 7:30 am – 3:15 pm - Holiday Inn Airport (HIA) –  
**SED-approved fiscal conference**  
that new school board members are required to take (more at [www.mcsba.org](http://www.mcsba.org)).

Monday, December 7, 7:00 am – 6:30 pm (meet at Bushnell's Basin Park & Ride)  
**ALBANY TRIP TO MEET WITH NYS OFFICIALS**

Wednesday, December 9 – noon (HIA) - Information Exchange Committee meeting  
**Quality Customer Service for Families and Community**

Wednesday, December 16 – noon (HIA) – Labor Relations Committee meeting  
**Update on Regional Negotiations Initiative**



## Administrator mentoring discussed

Members of the Finger Lakes Chapter of The NYS Association for Women in Administration (NYSAWA) met in October to discuss various strategies for mentoring school administrators. Leading the discussion was a panel that included Dr. Julie Donlon, Genesee Valley BOCES; Dr. Pamela Kissel, Churchville-Chili Superintendent; Maria Ehresman, Williamson Superintendent; Dr. Michele Hancock, Rochester Chief of Human Capital Initiatives; and Mary Alice Price, Pittsford Superintendent (all seen in upper right photo as Superintendent Price is recognized for being named 2009 NYS Superintendent of the Year by NYSCOSS).

Shown above left is NYSAWA Finger Lakes Chapter Chairperson Barbara Goldammer (Webster Curriculum Supervisor for Math K-12) leading the business portion of the meeting.

## From our president: This year's issues and activities off and running



Kathy Dillon

October has been a very busy month for MCSBA members! The Information Exchange and Labor Relations Committees had terrific programs this month. The Legislative Committee is working on two position papers—

audits and teacher quality—which will be discussed at the group's November meeting.

Many of us attended the NYSSBA convention in New York City a few weeks ago. We heard from our new NYSED Commissioner Dr. David Steiner and new Regents Chancellor Merryl Tisch. Both shared a fresh common sense approach to many of the issues we face.

We also heard from Senator Charles Schumer and Michael Resnick from NSBA who spoke about critical federal issues, including the difficult criteria involved with the Race to the Top program that may prevent New York State schools from participating. This is a program we need to learn more about in the next few months. James Sheedy of OMIG provided an overview of the Medicaid audits and compliance program for Medicaid billings for school districts.

The convention also offered many workshops—on technology, negotiations, superintendent/board relationships, energy efficiency and many other topics. Some of our MCSBA members from HFL and RH were presenters.

Our Tom Nespeca was elected as the first vice president of NYSSBA.

Congratulations, Tom!

News of mid year budget cuts presented additional challenges for every school district this month. With these proposed cuts and with the short-term stimulus money ending in the near future, we must continue our advocacy for funding, a Tier V retirement category, and the paper-work reduction bill, while we also work towards regional negotiations!

As you can see this has been a very busy month, and upcoming months promise to be just as action packed!

Thanks to all school board members who participate in all of the opportunities we have to be role models for continuous learning and strong advocates for public education!

*Kathy Dillon*



## BOCES shared administrative services reviewed

Jo Anne Antonacci, BOCES 2 Deputy Superintendent, and Daniel White, BOCES 1 Superintendent led a discussion at the October Information Exchange Committee meeting on shared administrative services provided through BOCES. Among their comments were:

- \* Shared services should save money before state aid is factored in.
- \* Not all BOCES offer the same shared services; districts may cross contract with outside BOCES.
- \* Regulatory barriers prevent expansion of shared BOCES services.
- \* Programs offered by BOCES frequently involve outside resources with particular expertise.



ABOVE: Luci Welch (Ken), Dr. Kevin McGowan (Bri), Gary Valenti (Bri), Phyllis Wickerham (RH), Denise Anthony (RH), Dr. Kenneth Graham (RH), Irene Narotsky (Pit), and Mike Zale (Spe).

BELOW & RIGHT: Mike Suffoletto (Web); Bob Iveson (Bro), Committee Co-Chair Chuck Allan, and presenters Jo Anne Antonacci and Dan White.



## Effects of governmental initiatives on labor relations



ABOVE: Labor Relations Committee Co-Chairs Sue Smith (RH) and Allen Williams (Roc) on either side of presenter Pilar Sokol of NYSSBA.

RIGHT: Karin Wilson (Pen) and Barbara McKinley (Pen) at the session.



At the October Labor Relations Committee meeting, Pilar Sokol, Esq., Deputy General Counsel for NYSSBA, provided an update on laws and regulations that are affecting school districts, such as:

- \* Upcoming Comptroller review of district reserve funds;
- \* Assessment of penalties for unlawful discrimination;
- \* Prohibition against reductions in retiree health insurance;
- \* Changes to unemployment benefits;
- \* Medicaid compliance regulations;
- \* New accountability designations for schools under NCLB;
- \* Proposed changes to the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- \* Qualifications for family and medical leave; and
- \* Responsibility of school districts for healthy environments.

## Issues with electronic packets discussed



LEFT: Some of the 70 school leaders attending the session on electronic board packets.

Electronic board packets save time, paper, and postage costs while providing an efficient way to communicate. In late October, 70 school district leaders attended the 19<sup>th</sup> MCSBA District Clerk Workshop to learn how 5 area districts organize these packets. Leading the discussion were Lynne Armstrong (Greece), Mia Kellogg (Avon), Rhonda Schaefer (Honeoye Falls-Lima), Pat Unterborn (Hilton), and Veronica Walker (Pittsford).



PRESENTERS- Rhonda Schaefer, Mia Kellogg, and Veronica Walker (left); and Lynne Armstrong (above). Not shown is Pat Unterborn.

# NYSCOSS Convention attracts 750+ participants.

At the Fall 2009 NYSCOSS Convention, learning opportunities for district leaders included round table discussions on a variety of issues such as educational technology, school construction projects, school law issues, reading instruction techniques, staff retention, shared services, communications during tough

collective bargaining, use of stimulus funds, school safety, Medicaid reimbursement, principal evaluations, and going green to save money.

A number of skill building workshops offered recommendations on topics including learning and leadership, buildings that support learning, retirement options, capital projects, improving special ed services, dealing with stake holders, and improving assessment results.

Also on the agenda were special meetings for new superintendents, and a global café discussion of major policy issues emerging in education.

Dr. Thomas Rogers, The Council Executive Director, closed the conference by noting that recent changes in Albany leadership provide a unique opportunity for superintendents to help make positive change in education reform.

Shown during NYSCOSS discussion of goals for education in NYS are –

LEFT: Adele Bovard (Web), and  
BELOW: Dr. Howard Maffucci (ER) and  
Dr. Michelle Kavanaugh (HFL).



Shown between sessions at the NYSCOSS Convention are –

ABOVE: Dr. Kevin McGowan (Bri), Dan White (B1), John Carlevatti (Pen).

RIGHT: Dr. Mark Davey (GC), Jo Anne Antonacci (B2), Bonnie Seaburn (Spe), Garry Stone (Bro), and Dr. Pamela Kissel (CC).



## From our executive director: *Race to the Top trade-off?*



**Jody Siegle**

What will you do for money? How much money does it take to get your full attention? How much money does it take to make an important difference? It's old wisdom that there is no free lunch so when the federal government offers to give New York \$430 million, the Board of Regents needs to get perfectly clear what the federal government will want in return.

In the last few weeks we have heard frequent references to the Race to the Top money, the \$4.35 billion that Secretary Duncan can divvy up to those states he determines are conforming to his goals

for innovation and improvement. The money presents a dazzling promise of funding to address important needs. The pot is large enough to get states to consider revamping their laws to comply with the application's emphasis on charter schools and procedures for teacher evaluations.

But there is a bigger issue than whether New York meets the federal criteria. Are there risks to the role of the Board of Regents if New York complies with federal expectations to accept this money? We saw a major shift in federal control of the public education agenda after NCLB became law. Will the Race money further erode New York's control of its education programs? An examination of the grant's requirements for how to undertake turning around low performing

schools reveals a highly prescriptive and intrusive process and becomes a cautionary flag about federal expectations.

New York State has an extraordinary history of supporting public education. Since 1787 the Board of Regents has been advocating for public education and New York is a leader in the development of high standards.

We need to consider what trade-offs would come in exchange for the Race money. Issues of control always arise when a lot of money is involved. By all means the Regents should pursue what will strengthen education in our state, but they should exercise caution that the price of their ability to determine what is best for New York not be traded for \$430 million.

*Jody Siegle*



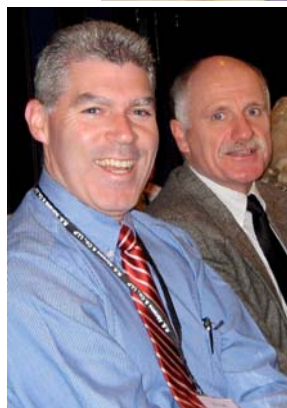
# Educational leaders gather at NYSSBA Convention

Many MCSBA members take advantage each year of the learning opportunities offered by the NYSSBA Convention. As in past years, MCSBA members help conduct the seminars on a wide variety of topics. Serving as seminar presiders were: Terry Brown-Steiner (ER), Mike DeLaus (B1), Debbie Lanceri (GC), Ed Lincoln (RH), NYSSBA VP Tom Nespeca (Web), MCSBA Executive Director Jody Siegle, and Dr. John Woods (former MCSBA Executive Director & former NYSSBA President).

MCSBA members who presented at seminars included:

\* MCSBA VP Dick Rasmussen, Dr. Michelle Kavanaugh, and Philip Burrows (all of HFL) who spoke on two topics at two separate seminars on: engaging the community in budget reallocations, and diversity in uniquely non-diverse communities; and

\* Pam Reinhardt, Sue Smith, and Dr. William Stroud (all of RH) who with Ray Wager, CPA led a discussion of effective audit committees.



Also at the Convention, Tom Nespeca (Web) was elected 1<sup>st</sup> VP of NYSSBA, a 2-year position expected to lead up to his being elected NYSSBA President in 2011 when the NYSSBA Convention is scheduled to occur in Rochester. He is seen below after the election of officers with incoming NYSSBA President Florence Johnson of Buffalo.

SHOWN ABOVE, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT):

Mike Andriatch (Bro) and Patrick Tydings (Gre);

Sue Smith and Pam Reinhardt (both of RH), during their presentation;

Chris Inzinga (Web) at one of the general sessions;

Sue Casey (Web) reading during a quiet moment.

CENTER ABOVE: HFL program presenters Philip Burrows, Dr. Richard Rasmussen, and Dr. Michelle Kavanaugh.



LEFT: Shown at a general session are Dan White (B1), Barbara Clark (GC), and MCSBA President Kathy Dillon (CC).



ABOVE: Seen at NYSSBA's annual business meeting are Mark Kokanovich (Bri) in background, Maureen Nupp (Fpt), and Tom Langelotti (Bro). During the business meeting, Maureen led a successful campaign to substitute the word "acceptance" for "tolerate" in a resolution about minority groups.



# How to achieve a positive tenure culture in your district

School attorney Wayne VanderByl, Esq., met with more than 30 board members and senior administrators from 13 school districts in our area in early October to lead a discussion entitled "Structuring the Tenure Culture in Your District for Quality and Accountability."

VanderByl stressed the importance of maintaining and strengthening management rights when dealing with issues of teacher hiring, evaluating, and disciplining. He cautioned district leaders that tenure is a privilege to be earned only by those who can demonstrate excellence in teaching.

He strongly recommended that districts establish clear, measurable, public standards that must be met by tenure candidates; that districts train administrators to conduct regular, objective evaluations based on the established standards; and hold administrators accountable for accurate evaluations of employee performance.

He asked district leaders to put the needs of their students first, to protect them from being negatively affected every school day by incompetent or mediocre teachers, and to prevent such teachers from hurting groups of students for the length of their careers. He noted that tenure is similar to marriage in that it can last a working lifetime.

VanderByl has worked with a number of districts in our region to help them develop systems to establish teaching standards and assessments. To learn

more, contact him at (315) 589-4500 or [vanderbyl@rochester.rr.com](mailto:vanderbyl@rochester.rr.com).

The program is one of many that is offered by the SUNY Oswego Educational Leadership Institute. To learn more about this initiative and its programs, contact Executive Program Director Dr. James Merrins at (716) 672-5473 or visit [www.SuperintendentOfSchools.com](http://www.SuperintendentOfSchools.com).

MCSBA was a co-sponsor of this session.



ABOVE: Sue Smith (RH) and Irene Narotsky (Pit).  
LEFT: Presenter Wayne VanderByl, Esq. with Marv Sachs (Bri) after the program.

RIGHT: Larry Vito, Lori Orologio, and Dr. Pamela Kissel, (all from Churchville-Chili); Karen Brown, Jo Anne Antonacci, and Gerry Maar (all from BOCES 2).



## MCSBA going to Albany on December 7

Join your school board and administrative colleagues  
as we take our issues and concerns to key state officials

Board our bus early in the morning at the Bushnell's Basin Park & Ride  
and return there by 6:15 pm at the latest

Details and registration information to follow.

# RAC CEMS promotes collaboration for effective teaching

Early in October, area educators met to explore ways that collaboration can improve teaching and learning as part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Educators Collaboration Event sponsored by the Rochester Area Colleges' Center for Excellence in Math and Science (RAC-CEMS).



Keynote speaker, Dr. James Stigler, co-author of *The Teaching Gap*, introduced best practices to enhance professional development by incorporating collaborative techniques. In addition, attendees participated in one of three sessions:

**Lesson Study:** A workshop including observation of the impact of collaboration on an actual class of students;

**Culture of Collaboration:** A practice session providing strategies for developing collaborative cultures in education communities;

**Professional Learning Communities:** Break-out sessions and a discussion focused on the development of Professional Learning Communities.



ABOVE: Dr. Makoto Yoshida, Director of the Center for Lesson Study, William Paterson University, leading a discussion of Lesson Study that included observation of an actual lesson.

LEFT: RAC CEMS Executive Director Dr. Charles Brown and Keynote speaker Dr. James Stigler prior to Dr. Stigler's address.

To learn more about RAC CEMS and its activities, visit [www.raccems.org](http://www.raccems.org), or contact Dr. Sara Silverstone, Associate Director, at (585) 389-2336 or [rsilver3@naz.edu](mailto:rsilver3@naz.edu).

## Students investigate construction careers.



Almost 1,100 high school students from 20 districts plus other agencies in our region experienced lots of hands-on construction activities during the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Construction Career Day held in October. The wide variety of experiences is partially shown in these pictures. Juniors and seniors were allowed to operate construction equipment. One student even got to soar higher than a passing airplane, as seen in the photo above.

To learn more about this opportunity, contact Lindsay Lukasiewicz of UNICON, which sponsored the event, at (585) 766-5061 or [lindsay@uniconrochester.com](mailto:lindsay@uniconrochester.com).

To learn more about ongoing construction career preparation programs through our schools, contact Jeff Dillon, who coordinates these initiatives through BOCES, at [Jeff\\_Dillon@boces.monroe.edu](mailto:Jeff_Dillon@boces.monroe.edu).







ABOVE: Dr. Jeff Kaczorowski, MD, Executive Director & President, TCA, noting positive outcomes of well-run after-school programs during TCA annual meeting in October.

TCA is a unique voice for our county's children: non-profit, independent, and non-partisan. TCA acts for children by initiating solutions, analyzing policies and programs, and collaborating with local leaders. Its initiatives help our schools by better preparing children to be active learners.

To learn more, call 585-256-2620, or go to [www.thechildrensagenda.org](http://www.thechildrensagenda.org).

## The Children's Agenda sets goals.

The Children's Agenda (TCA) studies data and reviews programs and policies that affect children. Once it's clear what works, TCA collaborates with local leaders to see that evidence-based programs and policies are incorporated into a system of support that gets to the root of problems for kids.

TCA's 2010 Community Action Plan for Greater Rochester's Children recommends proven, preventive programs to address the most urgent problems affecting children from babies to teens.

TCA proposes solutions in three areas to reach these three goals:

- \* Our children are born healthy into supporting families.
- \* Our children are prepared to learn and attend quality schools.
- \* Our children are prepared to be productive members of society.

The proposed solutions include:

- \* Expand the county's Nurse-Family Partnership Program to serve 1,000 families. (This program was a News Scope feature in June 2008.)
- \* Increase the number of quality child care settings by 20% by 2015.
- \* Increase numbers of high-quality after-school programs and risk-management programs for children.

## IAIE brings educators from around the world to Perinton

Educational leaders from many countries gathered at the Woodcliff in early October to share best practices that promote the development and maintenance of optimal learning environments at the International Alliance for Invitational Education (IAIE) World Conference. IAIE includes more than 600 professionals in 15 countries; members attended from as far away as Australia and China. Conference sessions explored issues such as self esteem of middle schoolers, cultural competence, dealing with at-risk youth, and teacher quality.

To learn more about IAIE, visit <http://www.invitationaleducation.net>. To learn more about the 2009 IAIE conference, contact Chairperson Mary Connery, Fairport faculty member (Mary\_Connery@fairport.monroe.edu).

BELOW: A delegation of educators from Hong Kong and China, shown here with hosts from the Fairport CSD, were part of the IAIE world conference held this year in Perinton, to share ways their schools create and sustain optimal learning environments, curricula, and programs that focus on student success.

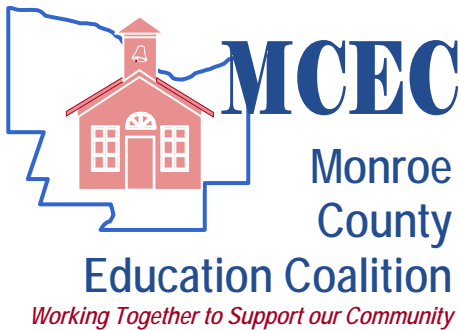


ABOVE: Rich Ognibene, Fairport Teacher and 2008 NYS Teacher of the Year, leading a conference discussion of strategies for providing a positive learning environment.





# Education coalition defines common issues



## MCEC is...

- ◆ a council that consists of parents, teachers, school board members, and community volunteers, as well as superintendents and other administrators from the 21 public school districts who are members of MCSBA;
- ◆ more than 20,500 parents, community members, teachers, support staff, students, and administrators who belong to the Genesee Valley Parent Teacher Association;
- ◆ a partnership whose members share the common purpose of providing the best education possible to the students in our public schools;
- ◆ more than 60,000 members who care about our community's next generation.

## MCEC strives to...

- ◆ encourage coalitions and teamwork among members.
- ◆ increase community awareness of societal issues that impact children's ability to learn.
- ◆ increase support for our excellent local public schools and BOCES.
- ◆ inform the community about issues that impact public schools.
- ◆ seek fair, predictable, and equitable state funding for public schools, including funds to support required educational mandates (e.g., New York State Learning Standards).
- ◆ work for continued inclusion of public school districts in distribution of Monroe County sales tax revenues.

**LOOK FOR PERIODIC MCEC BULLETINS that help to define issues faced by our public schools and their leaders.**

**MCEC** Monroe County Education Coalition  
Working Together To Support Public Education

Representing 60,000 Members  
220 Idlewood Road, Rochester, NY 14618 (585) 328-1972 www.mcsba.org/mcec

**POSITIONS**  
REAL PROPERTY TAX RELIEF  
Asking the impossible  
NYS public education Constitutional mandate  
Promoting math, science, technology (M.S.T.)  
Protecting programs for our neediest students  
What do we want for our kids?

**MCEC Member Groups**  
Genesee Valley PTA  
Monroe County Federation of Teachers  
NYSUT (NYS United Teachers)  
Monroe County Association of School Business Officials

**MCEC Bulletins** on current issues

**MCEC Brochure** schools as economic engines

**NYS officials** (contact info)

**About MCEC** Purpose, MCEC Board Members

**There IS a better way!**  
The Monroe County Education Coalition (MCEC) supports holding the line on property taxes by maintaining levels of state aid needed to conform to state mandates.  
Capping property taxes without eliminating mandates that drive increases in school budgets will in effect destroy our system of public education.  
MCEC recommends several reasonable alternatives to a property tax cap in its position paper.  
**Real Property Tax Relief That Won't Hurt Kids.**  
Click [here](#) to learn more.

**Monroe County's Public Schools**  
An economic & educational force in our community  
Click [here](#) to learn how our public schools serve our community

Visit <http://www.mcsba.org/mcec/index.htm> (opening page shown above) to learn more about MCEC. Note that the page provides a link to *Monroe County's Public Schools: A leading economic & educational force in our community*, which describes how our districts are an important part of our community's economic engine. Also accessible from the site are MCEC bulletins and position statements on educational issues, and other useful information.

## MCEC Membership Groups

Genesee Valley PTA  
Monroe County Association of School Business Officials  
Monroe County Federation of Teachers  
NYS United Teachers  
Monroe County Council of School Superintendents  
Monroe County School Boards Association  
School Administrators Association of NYS

## SAVE THE DATE: December 7 Albany Trip

Join school board and administrative colleagues in sharing our concerns with key state officials

Board our bus early in the morning at the Bushnell's Basin Park & Ride and return there by 6:15 pm at the latest

Details and registration information to follow.